



What YOU Should Know About Canada's Development-Assistance Program

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Minister for International Cooperation



BDI-1367

CANADIANS REACHING OUT TO THE WORLD

International development is about unlocking the potential of women and men, girls and boys to decide their own futures, build their own societies, and meet their own challenges. It's about helping the world's poorest countries and people share in the benefits of progress, and contribute to our common future.

Canada and Canadians have a special role to play in reducing poverty around the world. We have the resources, knowledge, and experience to share, and we have the trust and friendship of people overseas to help them reach their goals. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) delivers that help to those who need it.

Healthy, well-nourished, and educated people are the basis of prosperous economies and stable states. In an increasingly interdependent world, it is important for Canada to promote prosperity and stability around the world.

This brochure takes a look at Canada's development-assistance program—what it does and why it exists. I invite you to read the brochure, ask questions, and get involved as global citizens who care about the future we all share.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Maria Minna". The signature is written in a dark ink on a textured, brown background.

Maria Minna





Supporting sustainable development around the world

As the federal agency responsible for administering most of Canada's development-assistance program, CIDA supports projects that help reduce poverty among people in poor countries. It does this by providing assistance that gives people the tools they need to break out of poverty and build better lives for themselves and their children. In addition, CIDA provides humanitarian relief to victims of such emergencies as floods, droughts, and earthquakes.

CIDA provides funding to partners who deliver the assistance to people who need it. These partners include Canadian universities, non-profit organizations like the Red Cross, Oxfam Canada, and CARE Canada, private-sector companies, international agencies like UNICEF and the World Bank, and voluntary agencies based in developing countries.

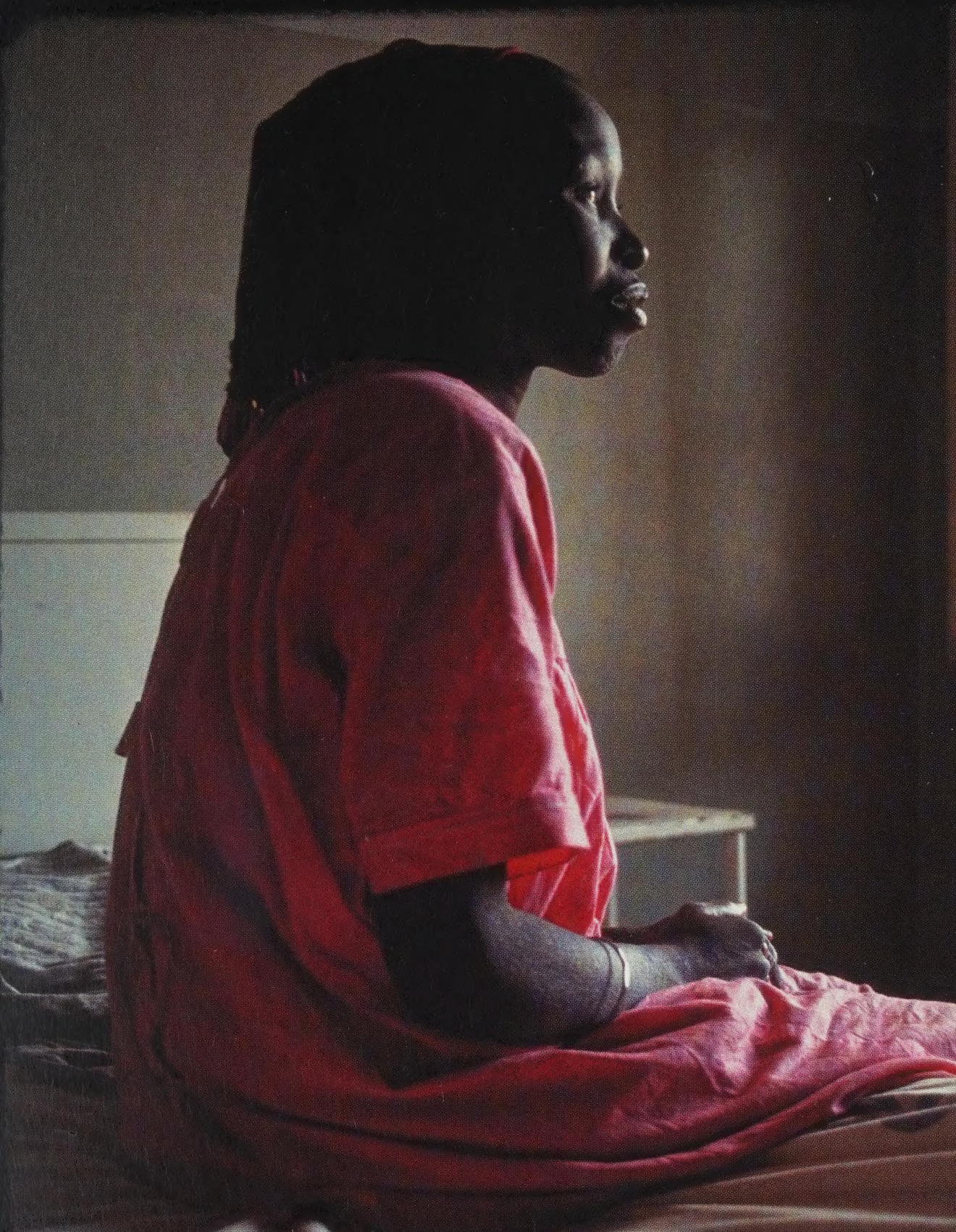


How does **Canada**
spend its development-
assistance budget?

The money is..

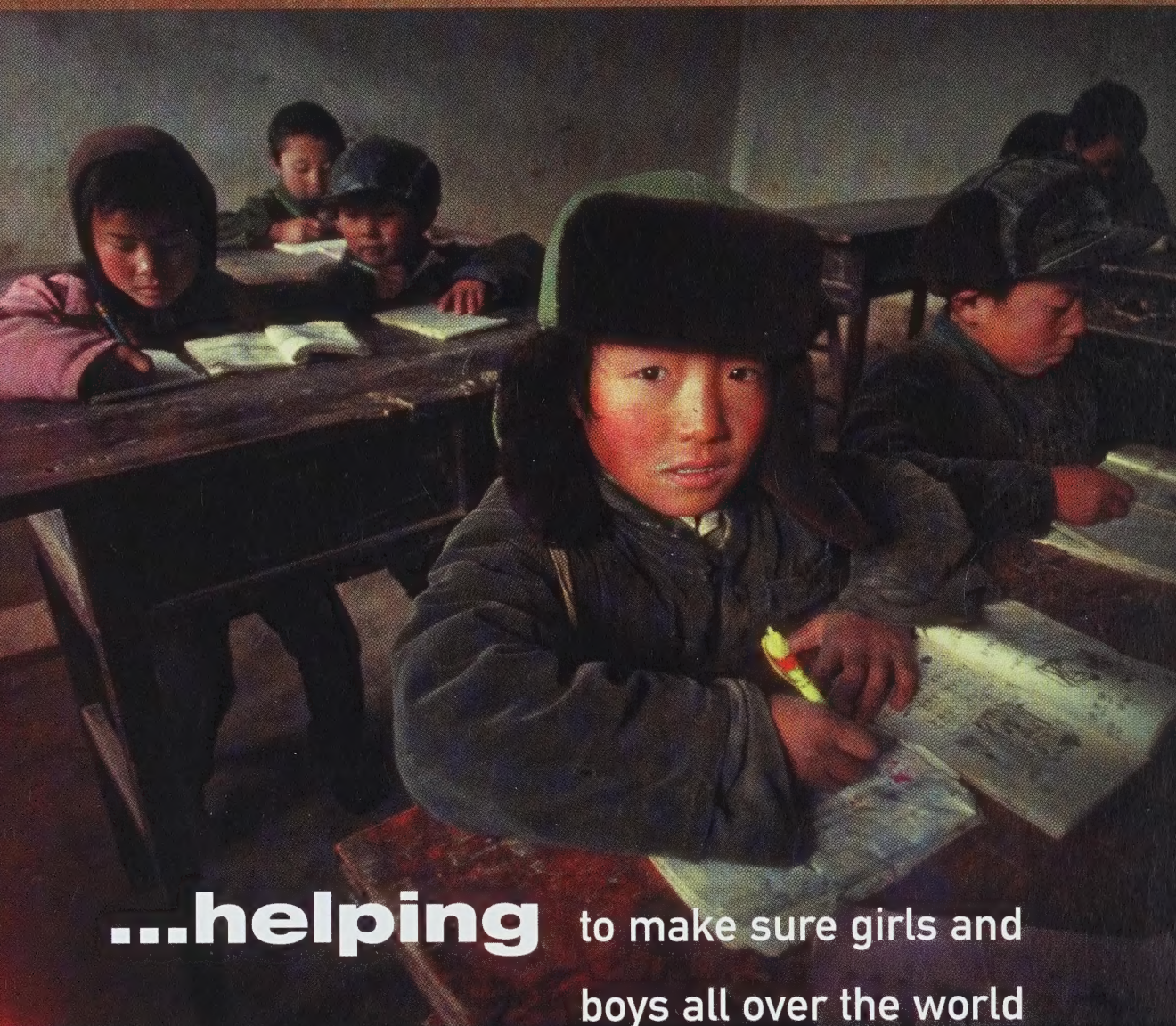
...helping

to immunize children in developing
countries against killer diseases like polio,
measles, and tuberculosis.



...helping

to slow the spread of HIV/AIDS
in many parts of the world.



...helping to make sure girls and boys all over the world

have an equal opportunity to go to school and learn basic skills like reading and writing.

...helping

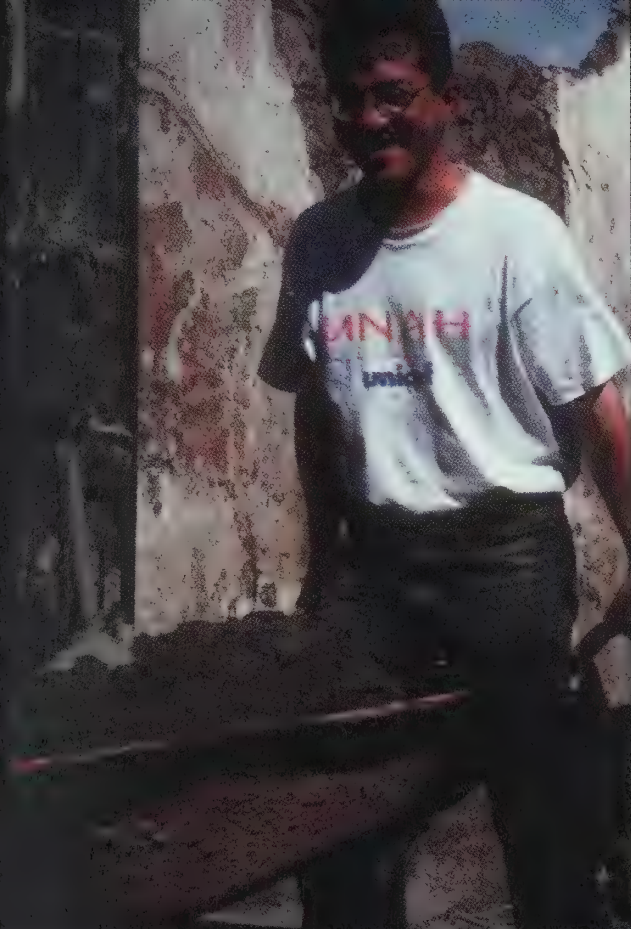
former child
soldiers in places
like Sierra Leone
and El Salvador return
to their communities.





...helping

the victims of war and
conflict rebuild their communities by
replacing homes, schools, and health-care
facilities destroyed during conflict.

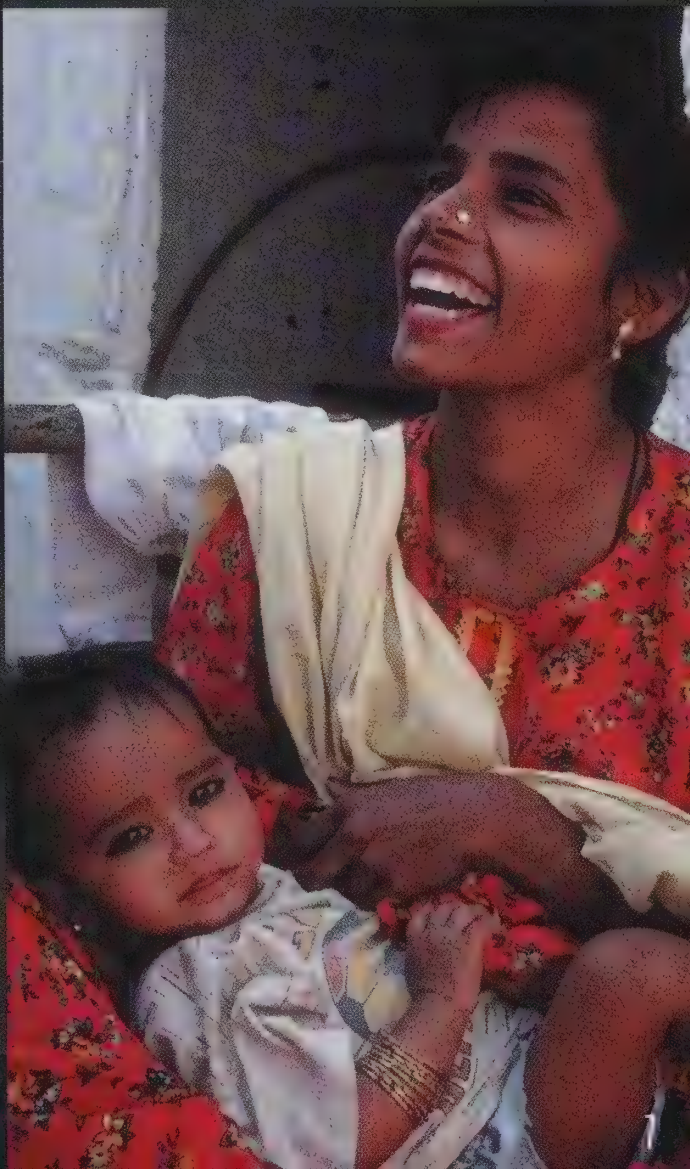


... helping

the victims of natural disasters, like the people of Nicaragua and Honduras who had to rebuild their lives after Hurricane Mitch's devastation.

...helping

people in developing countries by giving them better access to such services as family planning and reproductive health care.



Where the money

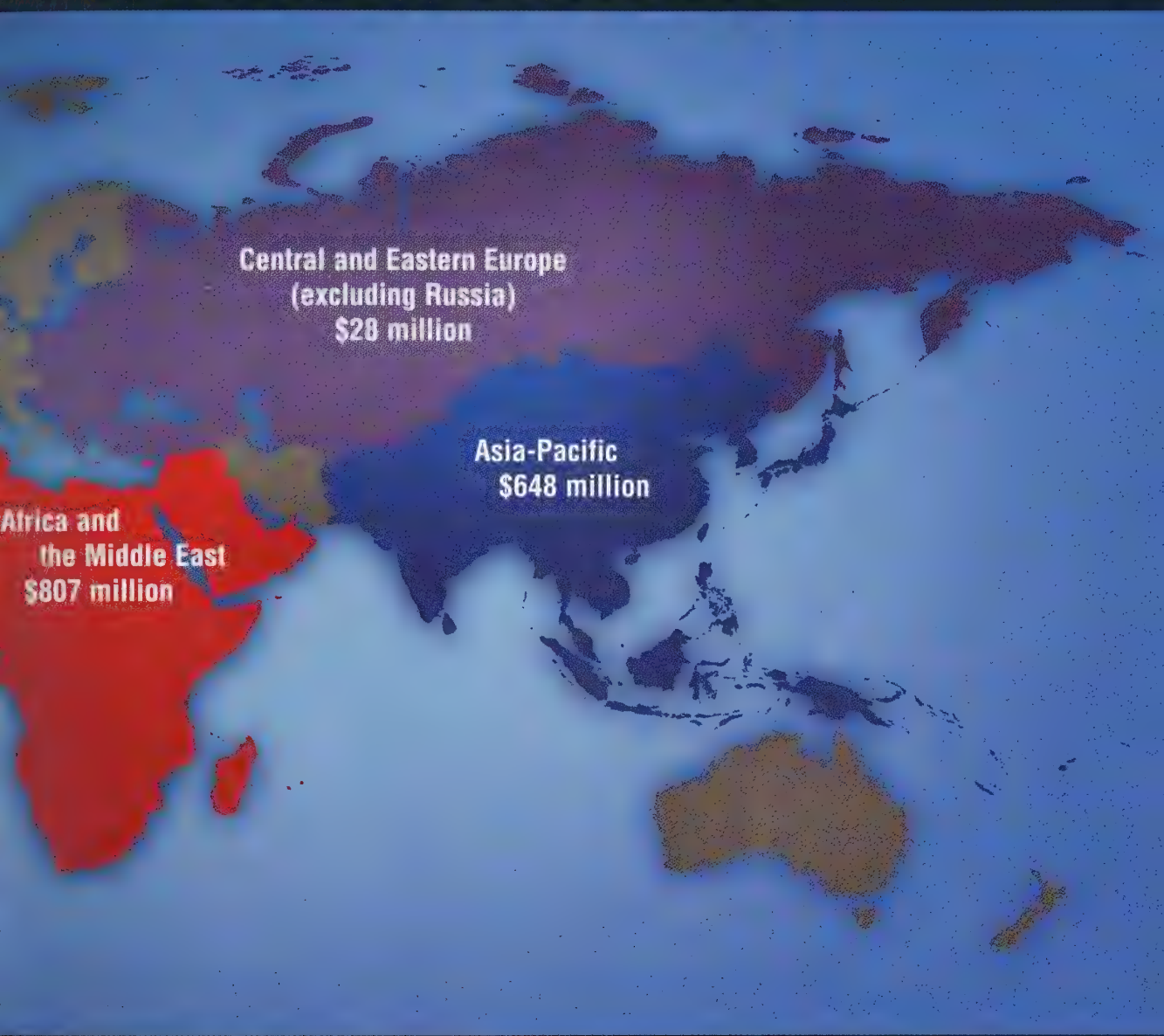
Canada spent \$2.59 billion in 1998-9



Amount not allocated by region: \$804 million
(includes, for example, CIDA funds channelled through the Canadian voluntary sector, funds for helping refugees from developing countries during their first year in Canada, funds for global-development initiatives like research, and the administrative costs of delivering aid)

goes

on development assistance



For every tax dollar the Government of Canada
collects, it spends less than two cents
on development assistance.



**Why spend money helping people
in foreign countries when we have problems
of our own here at home?**



...because

most Canadians believe
we should help when
children are starving,
or when poor countries
want to develop the
tools they need to
help themselves.

.because

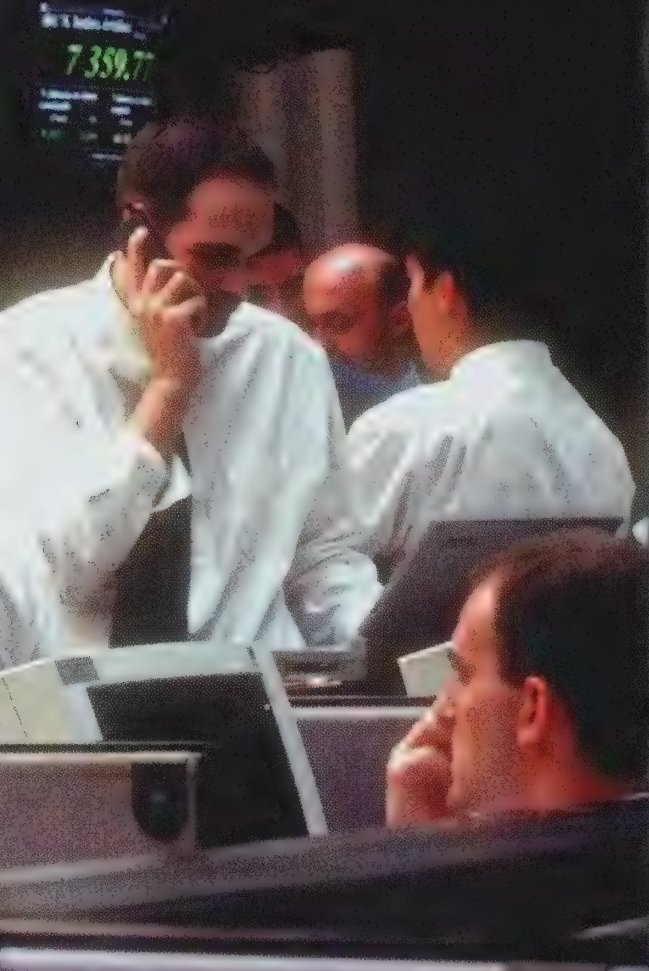
Canadians have the know-how to make a difference. We are experts in public health and nutrition, education, telecommunications, electricity, the environment, peacebuilding, and many other fields.



.because

Canada, like other countries, has a responsibility to help victims of war. This includes taking part in overseas operations to save lives.





...because

the economic well-being of every Canadian depends on the health of the world's economy. Developing countries make up a growing share of world trade, investment, production, and consumption—and Canada does more and more business with these countries every year.

...because

Canada has an obligation to help societies devastated by infectious diseases like HIV/AIDS. Of course, the health of Canadians can also be affected by the health of people everywhere. Disease travels—HIV/AIDS has travelled the globe in just over a decade.



...because

when developing countries make decisions about their environment, it almost always has an impact on our environment.

...because

crime crosses borders, affects our communities, and threatens our personal safety. Illicit drugs produced in impoverished regions of the developing world are often bought and sold in Canada. By helping people in these regions find new and innovative ways to support themselves, Canada can help slow the spread of drug-related violence and crime, both in developing countries and at home.

Some **myths** and **realities** about **Canada's** development- assistance program



Myth...

Development assistance goes mostly to governments—some of them corrupt—and often doesn't get to the people who need it most.

Reality...

CIDA delivers assistance mostly through international and local organizations that work directly with people at the community level. Slightly less than one-third of Canada's development assistance goes to international organizations like UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund). These agencies are in the field, directly helping those who need it most. When CIDA does work with other governments, it provides mainly goods and services or personnel. CIDA also supports projects to reduce corruption.

Myth...

Efforts by richer countries like Canada to get rid of poverty in developing countries have mostly failed.

Reality...

Thanks to the combined efforts of many countries and individuals:

- more people have escaped poverty in the last 50 years than in the previous 500;
- the average life span in developing countries is now 64 years, up from 55;
- the death rate for children has been cut in half;
- malnutrition rates have declined by almost a third; and
- today, there are more people in the world who can read than who cannot.





Myth...

Our assistance program imposes Canadian values on different cultures.

Reality...

Canada promotes basic universal values such as respect for human rights, democracy, and the law—values that people accept around the world. But we don't assume every approach that works in Canada will work in a developing country. The best way to help people help themselves is to offer support and advice that they can adapt to local conditions, and to encourage them to find their own unique solutions.

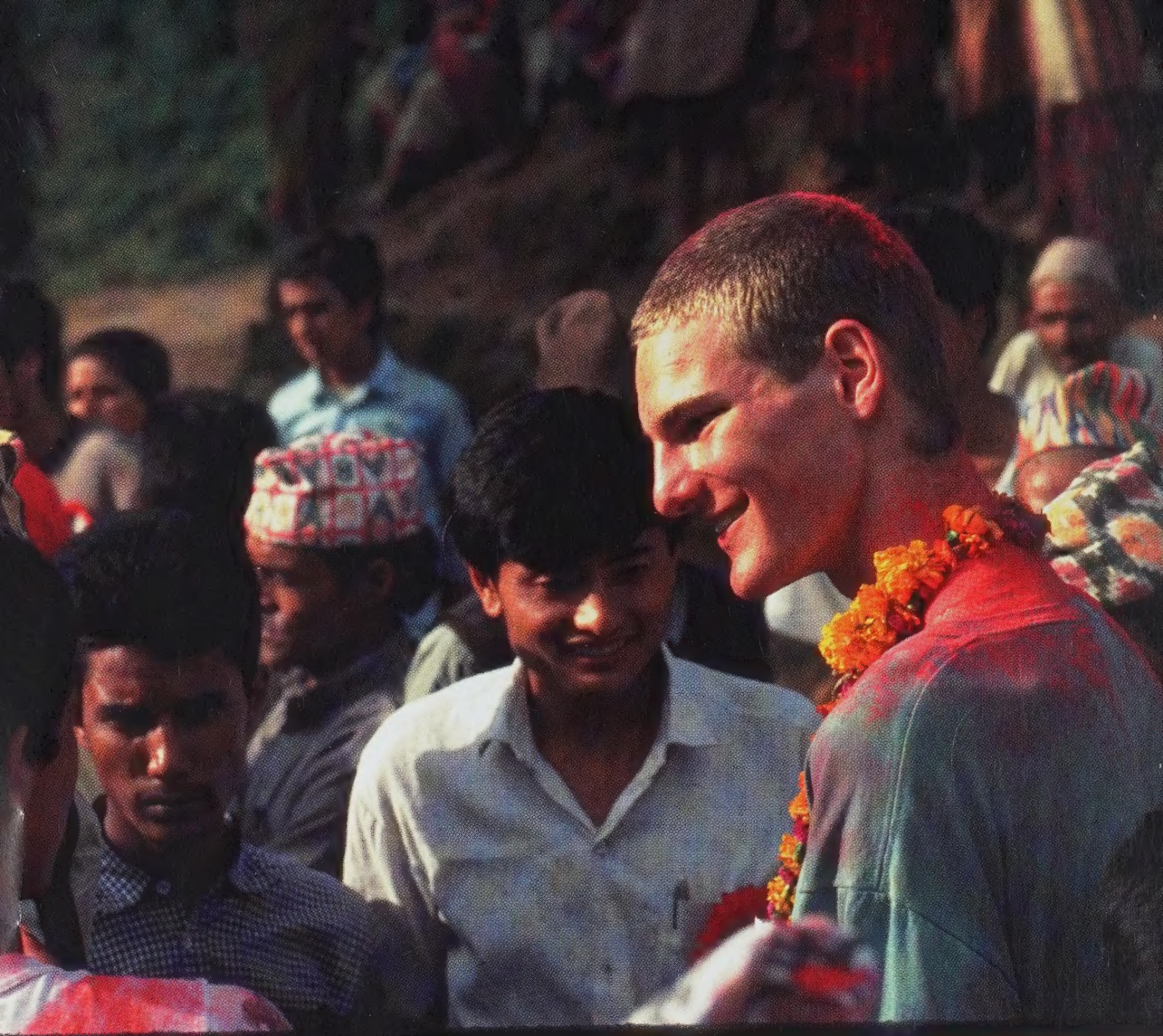


Myth...

Giving assistance to people in developing countries just encourages them to depend on us.

Reality...

People in crisis do depend on countries like Canada for help. But emergency assistance accounts for only eight percent of CIDA's budget. The rest goes to projects that help other societies depend on us less. Even with emergency aid, once the crisis is over, the focus shifts to helping people build a future they can manage on their own.

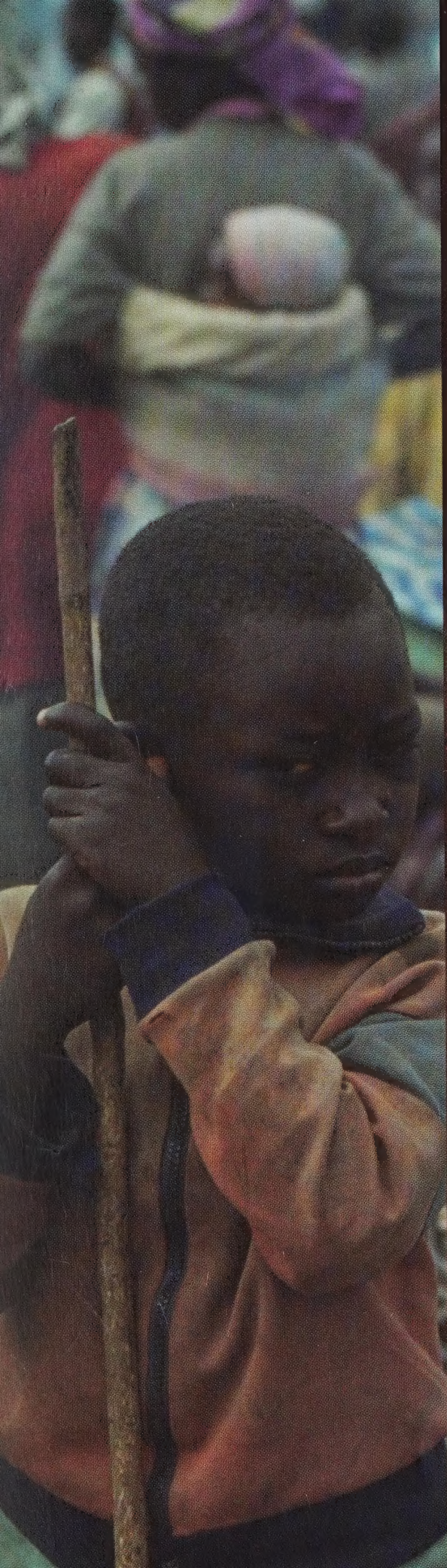


Myth...

Canada's development-assistance program benefits Canadians more than it does people in developing countries.

Reality...

It's true that thousands of Canadians work in international development, and that most of our assistance dollars return to Canada because we use Canadian goods and services to deliver that assistance. But developing countries need Canadian expertise, materials, and resources. At the same time, Canada is working with other donor countries to try to encourage more purchases in the developing countries themselves, when it's possible.



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To find out more about what CIDA is doing around the world, visit our Web site at www.acdi-cida.gc.ca.

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La version française de cette brochure est aussi disponible sous le titre *Ce que vous devez savoir sur le programme canadien d'aide publique au développement*.